

12.765



ECA-MRAG
ECA Multidisciplinary
Regional Advisory Group

**REPORT ON
FIFTH SESSION OF AFRICAN MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE
ON THE ENVIRONMENT
HELD IN ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA
22-27 NOVEMBER 1993**

**By
REGIONAL ADVISOR ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT**

**Addis Ababa
December 1993**

ECA/MRAG/93/43/TP

UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA
Multi-disciplinary Regional Advisory Group

REPORT ON
FIFTH SESSION OF AFRICAN MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE
ON THE ENVIRONMENT
HELD IN ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA
22-27 NOVEMBER 1993

BY
REGIONAL ADVISOR ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

ADDIS ABABA
DECEMBER 1993

Table of Contents

I.	Introduction	1
2.	Achievements of AMCEN since 1985	2
3.	Future prospects of AMCEN	3
4.	Highlights of decisions of Fifth AMCEN Conference	4
5.	Critical analysis of AMCEN's decisions	9
	Policy issues	9
	Analysis of AMCEN's programme, 1994-1995	11
	- Food-self sufficiency and food security	12
	- Harmonisation of legislations	17
	- Coordination of macro-economic planning	17
	- Integrating environmental concerns in development planning process	19
	Operationalization of Agenda 21	19
	Essential reforms	23
6.	Role of ECA in the implementation of Agenda 21 in the Context of AMCEN	24
	Status of environment and development programme at ECA	24
	Implementation of Agenda 21: Role of Regional Commissions	25
	Imperative need for modification of the ECA environment/development programme	27

I. INTRODUCTION

The African Ministerial Conference on the Environment (AMCEN), which was established in 1985 in Cairo, Egypt, held its fifth session in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia (26-27 November 1993). The fourth session was held in at UNEP (Nairobi) in 1991. The fifth session was the first session held after the Rio Conference (June 1992). The primary purpose of the Conference was, therefore, to consider new policy orientation for the Conference. The Conference was attended by 45 African member States, UN agencies, Regional and sub-regional and non-governmental organisations. The list of the participants is shown in the adopted Report of the Conference.

The Conference was opened by H.E. Tamirat Layne, Prime Minister of the Transitional Government of Ethiopia. Other opening statements were heard from:

- (i) Secretary General of OAU
- (ii) Executive Director of UNEP
- (iii) Executive Secretary of ECA

The opening session was also addressed by the out-going President of AMCEN, the Minister of Environment and Protection of Nature of Senegal. Additional statements were delivered by the following:

- (i) Executive Secretary of INC-D
- (ii) The Representative of the UNDP Administrator
- (iii) Director of International Decade for Disaster Reduction (IDNDR)
- (iv) The Representative of the Director General of UNIDO

The Conference elected its Bureau as follows:

Zimbabwe: Chairman
Cameroon: Vice Chairman
Uganda : Vice Chairman
Morocco: Vice Chairman
Burkina Faso: Vice Chairman
Botswana: Vice Chairman
Ghana : Rapporteur

II. ACHIEVEMENTS OF AMCEN SINCE 1985

In reviewing the role of AMCEN since its established in 1985, the following were cited as the outstanding achievements of the Conference:

- (i) The adoption in January 1991 of the Bamako Convention on Hazardous Wastes;
- (ii) The adoption in November 1991 of the African Common Position on Environment and Development;
- (iii) The establishment and promotion of eight net-works in the following areas:
 - Environment monitoring
 - Climatology
 - Soils and fertilizers
 - Energy
 - Water resources
 - Genetic resources
 - Environment education and training
 - Science and Technology

(iv) The establishment of five committees on principal ecosystems:

- African Deserts and Arid Lands (ADALCO)
- River and Lake Basins
- Forests and Woodlands
- Island ecosystems, and
- Regional seas.

(v) The significant role the conference played in harmonizing Africa's Position on Global Environmental Issues.

III. THE FUTURE PROSPECTS OF AMCEN

The Conference decided on the imperative need for AMCEN to be placed on anew course so as to be able to spear-head the African efforts in the area of environment and as well as facilitating actions and harmonizing positions . It was emphasized that the Conference needed a political leverage as well as the imperative need to forge closer links with the African intergovernmental organizations, OAU, other African ministerial conferences, the UN and international bodies active in the region.

AMCEN future preoccupation must be in the mobilization of resources particularly in using locally generated resources. The Conference, therefore, encouraged African countries to allocate a percentage of their GDP for environmental programmes at the national, sub-regional and regional levels.

IV. HIGHLIGHTS OF DECISIONS OF FIFTH AMCEN CONFERENCE

The document "Decisions of the Fifth Session of the Conference" provides a summary of the decisions of the AMCEN. The major decisions which were taken are in the following areas:

- (a) Policy issues
 - (i) Mandate of AMCEN
 - (ii) Functions

- (b) Organisational and operational arrangements
 - (i) Committees
 - (ii) Sub-regional ministerial conferences
 - (iii) Networks
 - (iv) Inter-Agency Working Group

- (c) Conference programme.
- (d) Other conference matters:
 - Desertification,
 - Natural disasters,
 - African strategies for implementation of Agenda 21,
 - African meeting on Biodiversity Convention.

- (e) Resources required by the conference
- (f) Resolution of the Conference endorsing the new policy orientation and other relevant issues.

COMMENTARY

AMCEN ACHIEVEMENTS

It is not the intention of this review to dwell on the past events. I submit to the request made by the Executive Director of UNEP in her opening speech that the Conference should not merely

take stock of the earlier performances but concentrate on re-orienting its strategy to meet future challenges. However, a few remarks on AMCEN past achievements and failures should guide us in determining future priorities.

The Bamako Convention

Resolution CM/Res.1225(L) of the OAU Council of Ministers decided to set up a Working Group of legal and environment experts to "draw up a draft African Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes in all forms in the continent". The need for an African Convention arose from the fact that the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes, adopted in March 1989, had not adequately reflected the concerns and interests of Africa. The Bamako Convention on the Ban of the Import into Africa and the Control of Transboundary Movement and Management of Hazardous Wastes within Africa was negotiated and adopted in January 1991 in Bamako, Mali.

According to Article 15, the Conference of the Parties would be convened by the Secretary General of OAU not later than one year after entry into force of the Convention. Article 25 states that the Convention would enter into force on the ninetieth day after the date of deposit of the tenth instrument of ratification from parties signatory to the Convention. It is now almost three years since the Convention was adopted in Bamako, but only one or two countries have ratified the Convention. It would appear that the pressing need which prompted the formulation and adoption of the Convention has melted.

The African Common Position on Environment and Development (ACPED)

The General Assembly, by Resolution 44/228 mandated the Regional Commissions, inter alia, to prepare their regions for the United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development.

The ACPED was prepared by ECA but with substantial support of the Joint Secretariat, which was made up of UNDP, UNEP, UNSO, the UNCED Secretariat itself as well as ADB and the OAU. Two sessions were held; the First Regional Ministerial UNCED preparatory Conference in Cairo (11-16 July 1991) and the Second Conference in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire, 11-14 November 1991. The Cairo Conference accepted the framework of the African Common Position which was later consolidated for adoption at the Abidjan Conference.

The Networks

It has been acknowledged that the performance of the networks during the last seven years has been below expectations due to several factors, including inadequate financial resources. The Conference decision to relocate the networks in "existing African national centres, sub-regional organisations and regional institutions" may be sounding the death-bell for the networks. Most of these African institutions are already experiencing serious financial difficulties in meeting the basic recurrent expenditures because of the inability of African member States to make their contributions to the programmes. It is not yet clear how these new foster parents will be able to raise new and additional financial resources to carry out networking activities. Moreover, the move to relocate the networks in African national centres, sub-regional organisations and regional institutions is not really a drastic move. This is because nearly all of the networks with the exception of Environmental Monitoring and Science and Technology

are already under the aegis of national centres, and regional institutions.

The Ecosystem Committees

The AMCEN set up five ecosystem committees on areas of priority environmental concern, which were to function between the conference sessions - to assist the Bureau of the Conference to carry out its functions. The mandates of the ADALCO Committee, for example, were as follows:

- (i) initiation and development of action programmes aimed at combating desertification with particular emphasis on the Sahara, Somali-Chalbi and Kalahari-Namibe deserts;
- (ii) promotion and strengthening of natural and subregional capabilities in land use planning and the management of desertified lands;
- (iii) fostering coordination strategies between countries and subregions in planning and implementing anti-desertification activities;
- (iv) assisting subregional organisations (eg. IGADD, SADC, CILSS, etc.) in the coordination and implementation of their anti-desertification programmes.

The ADALCO Committee met in Dakar, Senegal (March 1987), Dakar (May 1988) Ougadougou, Burkina Faso, (February 1990) Algiers, Algeria (December 1990) and Harare, Zimbabwe (November 1991). The ADALCO committee prepared programmes and projects on desertification control, however, most of them were never implemented due to unavailability of financial resources.

It is acknowledged that the ADALCO Committee although it has been operational, it has not brought about the additional impetus envisaged. It has been suggested that a lot of resources were used for organisation of the meetings which could have gone into combating the process of desertification in member States. It would be interesting to determine the total amount expended at all these meetings and estimate the extent to which it could have reversed desertification in the African Countries experiencing desertification.

The Conference decision that the five ecosystem committees be functional only at AMCEN sessions is particularly interesting. It is understood that they will function as conference committees and that each committee will be chaired by a bureau member. It is also understood that the committee will consider the ATREG reports and recommendations related to the five committees. It would have been probably most logical to establish additional net-works to take over the functions of these committees. I do not see anything wrong in having a net work on Deserts and Arid Lands or Island Ecosystems or Forests and woodlands.

AMCEN's Role in harmonizing Africa's position on Regional/Global Issues

AMCEN played the pivotal role in sensitizing member States on sub-regional as well regional environmental issues. Through the various Sub-regional Environmental Groups (SREGS), AMCEN was able to harmonize sub-regional environmental issues which were in some instances translated into development programmes at field level (eg. Zambezi Action Plan). In addition, the SREGS were expected to service the sub-regional intergovernmental organisations such as SADC, CILSS and IGADD. AMCEN also supported the participation of many delegates from various SREGS in regional meetings/conferences

in order to present environmental problems peculiar to their sub-regions.

V. CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF AMCEN'S DECISIONS

Policy Issues

Of all the decision taken by the Conference, the policy issue was the most hotly contested. In both the Experts Group meeting and the Ministerial segment, there was a move to transfer AMCEN Secretariat to OAU in order to legitimize the political role proposed for AMCEN. Some experts as well as the Ministers expressed the view that the conference should discharge its mandate "under the auspices of the OAU", and within the framework of the treaty establishing the African Economic Community. Currently the Secretariat of the Conference is jointly run by UNEP, ECA and OAU. It will be recalled that the Conference of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs as well as the Heads of State and Government meet under the aegis of the OAU.

The language on the mandate of AMCEN was eventually revised to include other institutions as follows:

"actively support in cooperation with OAU, UNEP, ECA, the ADB and the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community and other competent regional institutions the efforts of African States individually and collectively, with regard to national, subregional and regional issues on environment and sustainable development."

Although one of the functions of AMCEN is to, "promote the integration of environment through inter-ministerial cooperation

and cross-sectoral coordination," the mechanism on how this integration is to be effected is not spelt out.

The Conference Programme

The Conference acknowledged that poverty is the major cause of environmental degradation in Africa. "The scarcity of resources for initiation, stimulation and sustenance of development activities is at the root of under-development and environmental degradation in developing countries, particularly Africa." The conference further recognized poverty as "a vicious cycle of global economic transactions which have sustained the inequality in development between the North and the South." In the absence of alternative means of livelihood man destroys his own environment.

The Conference then adopted operational strategies to be undertaken concurrently at the national and sub-regional levels in order to alleviate poverty and, therefore, minimize environmental degradation. The actions to be undertaken at the national, sub-regional and regional levels as well as the responsibilities of the Secretariat were identified.

The 1994/1995 Conference programme consists of twelve sub-programmes; they were listed in order of priority by the Conference as follows:

- 1.0 Capacity-building (within the context of Agenda 21) at national level
- 1.2 Environmental law, institutions and policies
- 2.0 Environmentally-sound management of terrestrial ecosystems and their resources.

- 2.1 Environmentally-sound management of soils and agricultural lands.
- 2.2 Preventing and reversing desertification, mitigating the impacts of drought
- 2.3 Environmentally-sound management and sustainable use of forests and savannah woodlands.
- 3.0 Environmentally-sound management of fresh water resources
- 4.0 Environmentally-sound management of hazardous and all waste and toxic chemicals.
- 5.0 Environmentally-sound management of marine and coastal areas, including island ecosystems.
- 6.0 Promoting human welfare, environment and development
- 6.1 Managing demographic change and populations pressures.
- 6.2 Development of human settlements, planning and management
- 7.0 Managing the environmental impacts of climate change and climate variability
- 8.0 Securing greater energy efficiency and sufficiency.
- 9.0 Monitoring and assessing the state of the African environment
10. Promotion of sub-regional and regional cooperation
11. Promoting the role of major groups in Africa's environmental management
12. Mobilizing support for implementation of Africa's environmental programme at the national, sub-regional and regional levels.

Analysis of AMCEN's Programme (1994-1995)

It is quite obvious from the information provided in the matrix (See Table 1) that the Fifth session was reviewing programmes which were debated by the Conference as far back as 1985. The major difference between the programmes approved for 1994/95 and those of previous years is that the current ones exceed

those of 1985. One main reason is of course the recent UNCED for which the region had adequately to prepare (see Programme for the African Common Position).

Despite what I have just said concerning the ever increasing number of African environmental programmes in relation to the availability of financial resources to implement them, there are certain distinct variations as discussed below.

Food Self-Sufficiency and Food Security

The concept of food security at the household level usually entails all people at all times having both physical and economic access to the basic food they need. Availability of such food must be produced locally and stored or purchased in the market or transferred from other regions. In general sustainable food security at household level emphasises food production in order to meet domestic consumption.

It was the Kampala Conference which placed emphasis on this issue. The conference observed, "shortage of food in many African countries creates insecurity and environmental threats." For Africa to produce adequate food to properly feed her people, promote economy and sustain the environment, the Kampala Conference recommended the need to transform the African agriculture through research and adoption of appropriate technologies. Because of harsh climatic conditions prevailing in Africa unreliable rainfall as well as uneven topography and poor soils, only the most appropriate technologies should be adopted.

The Kampala Conference, therefore, recommended the training of women in agricultural research, extension services as well as

allowing them to participate fully in planning and implementation of local and national agricultural programmes and activities.

It was further recommended that local farmers should be encouraged to adopt practices that are ecologically sustainable for promotion of national food security.

Food-self sufficiency and food security in the context of the African Common Position

The issue of food-self-sufficiency and food security featured prominently in the African Common Position. The deterioration in local food production was blamed largely on "inadequate emphasis by national governments and the non-streamlining of international assistance activities as well as massive food aid programmes." In order to enhance food production in rural areas it was recommended, inter alia that local communities and NGOs must be involved in the design and implementation of policies. Other recommendations included improvement in rural transport, technology and techniques; enhancement of research and the development of high yielding varieties as well as environmentally adaptable species; development of agro-meteorological services; and the improvement of small scale food processing/storage industries.

Was food-self sufficiency and food security an issue at the Earth Summit?

Of the developing worlds, Latin America and the Caribbean Asia and the Pacific, only the African region included the issue of food-self sufficiency and food security in its document (see ECA/MRAG/92/2). This was not surprising at all. After all Africa is the only continent where per capita food production has continued to decline since the early 1960s while its population has

been on the increase. It has been estimated that in 1975/79 the region produced 83% of her cereal requirements and imported 8 million tons; it is predicted that by the year 2000 the net cereal import will rise to 49 million tons and Africa will only be producing 56% of the cereal she needs. In contrast, food imports as well as food aid have been on the increase resulting in unhealthy dependence on western foods which cannot be grown locally. The dumping of food on the African market at subsidized prices has also weakened the capacity of the African small farmer to produce.

Although food self-sufficiency and food security was not raised by other regions, I must point out that Promoting Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development constitutes chapter 14 of Agenda 21. The chapter is concerned with the imperative need to (i) replace traditional agriculture particularly in Africa with new technologies that are sustainable; (ii) secure water supply for year-around cropping; (iii) reverse soil degradation by new as well as old technologies; (iv) promote rural development to provide storage as well as processing and distribution of produce.

The programme areas discussed in this chapter are as follows:

- (a) Agricultural policy review, planning and integrated programming in the light of multi-functional aspect of agriculture, particularly with regard to food security and sustainable development;
- (b) Ensuring people's participation and promoting human resource development for sustainable agriculture;
- (c) Improving farm production and farming systems through diversification of farm and non-farm employment and infrastructure development;

- (d) Land resource planning information and education for agriculture;
- (e) Land conservation and rehabilitation;
- (f) Water for sustainable food production and sustainable rural development;
- (g) Conservation and sustainable utilization of plant and animal genetic resources for food and sustainable agriculture;
- (h) Integrated pest management control in agriculture;
- (i) Sustainable plant nutrition to increase food production;
- (j) Rural energy transition to enhance productivity.

Food-self-sufficiency and food security in the proposed AMCEN programme

The fifth AMCEN conference was totally silent on the issue of food self-sufficiency and food security. The closest the conference came to was the proposed programme on "Environmentally - sound management of soils and agricultural lands." However, the activities here relate to assistance in land use, assessments and identification of vulnerable areas, etc resulting in national soil policies and guidelines. The output is certainly not food-self sufficiency and food security as defined earlier. It is not clear why this issue has lost "steam".

Integrating Environmental Concerns in Development Planning Process

Throughout the UNCED preparatory process and at the Earth Summit itself, integrating environment and development was the fulcrum on which all other issues hinged. Indeed, this was the theme of the Rio Conference. But to day it looks as if the issue is almost dead, other than paying lip-service to the idea. How does one implement Agenda 21 without ensuring that environmental policies are fully integrated in development plans of other sectors - economic planning, agriculture, health, industry, transport, education, etc ?

The ECA document on "African Strategies for the Implementation of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development Agenda 21", which the fifth AMCEN Conference took note of, states as follows, in paragraph 372:

"AMCEN should play a deciding role in charting out, with relevant ministries, particularly those responsible for economic development planning and finance, relevant government departments as well as the non-government sector, the procedures for integrating environment into development planning, programme implementation, monitoring and evaluation."

One would have expected integrating environment and development to be one of AMCEN's sub-programmes for 1994/1995. Some of the major activities would have been (i) harmonization of legislation and regulations (ii) macroeconomic planning, direction and co-ordination.

Harmonisation of legislations

As indicated earlier environmental initiatives in Africa have hitherto encountered daunting challenges due to flows in environmental protection laws. The laws are scattered in the various economic sectors whose activities impinge on environmental management. Because different authorities are responsible for enforcing different aspects of laws, it is difficult to know which takes priority over the other. Time has come when the national environmental protection laws should be harmonized and re-enforced. African governments should also institute mechanisms for environmental review for proposed projects - locally or internationally sponsored so long as they hinge on exploitation of natural resources. Any national projects in mining, agriculture, fisheries industry, etc should endeavour to rationally utilize the resources in a manner that sustains the environment. This reinforces the imperative need for EIA for proposed projects. EIA should be carried out by prospective investors (or donors) in collaboration with government environmental agencies. It may be prudent to set up parastatal organisations mandated to carry out EIA as most governments and donors are now increasingly insisting on EIA.

Coordination of macroeconomic planning

In most member States there is a lack of correlation between conservation strategies and national development plans. African governments must not only integrate environmental programmes in development process but must, in addition, design long term national projections to accommodate environmental needs. To ensure full integration of environment in decision making process, African governments should establish high level environmental representation in key economic ministries. An alternative

arrangement could be to establish a specific Agency on Environment and Development (AED) to be responsible for all the final decisions on economic development matters. A major responsibility of the AED would be to ensure that environmental concerns are made part of and constitute the backbone to planning process of all development programmes.

AMCEN'S Approach : Environmental Economics and Accounting

The 1994/95 AMCEN programme proposes the promotion of activities in environmental economics and accounting as well as environmental law, institutions and policies.

Local staff trained in these fields will be able to monitor and evaluate sustainable development process as well as reviewing the state of the environment and national resources (see sub-programme). It is further envisaged that trained staff in these areas will harmonize environmental data and macroeconomic accounting systems thereby expanding the existing systems of national economic accounts in order to integrate fully environmental and social dimensions in the accounting systems. It is to be hoped that an integrated environmental and economic accounting will be established in African States. This new system of accounting will permit a new out look on economic growth and wealth. Although the AMCEN programme is plausible, there is no good reason to postpone the issue of integrating environmental policy in other sectors until trained environmental/economic accountants are available. I will now make an attempt to provide some personal reflections on this issue.

Integrating Environment in Development Planning Process :
Africa's Past Experience

Since the 1972 Stockholm Conference on Environment and Human Settlements, African countries have formulated national plans for the management of the African environment. The plans have included strategies for the management of forests, soils, drought, decertified lands, etc. Some countries have established ministries and/or protection agencies of environment. Environmental protection focused on ameliorating the effects human activities as well as setting up limits to harmful activities of man instead of stressing the ways to improve ecological resilience and development actions. In addition, the environment ministries/agencies were responsible for cleaning up the mess after the limits had been exceeded. National parks and reserves were established mainly for aesthetic value rather than for conservation of genetic diversities as well as the sequestration of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. However, there has been a general lack of co-ordination between conservation strategies on one hand and the national development plans on the other. Moreover, in most countries national development plans span a period of five years, which is too short a period for the regeneration of depleted resources such as soils and forests.

Operationalization of Agenda 21

The African governments as well as their IGO's participated actively in the UNCED preparatory process and the Rio Conference. With the assistance of UNDP country offices they prepared and submitted to the UNCED Secretariat the National Development Reports. Our survey reveals that each country has reviewed extensively the various national issues on environment and development. In most instances the national issues are essentially

those addressed in the African Common Position with small differences here and there of emphasis. It is important to stress that most countries have not formulated official national policies on the question of integration of environmental concerns in the development process, although environmental issues have always been addressed either directly or indirectly through a number of development programmes. The Nigerian Report, however, states, "While strengthening the existing environmental, regulatory measures and enforcement, the Government (of Nigeria) is now also exploring, as a matter of priority, how best to expand and improve our environmental policies by introducing new economic incentives and disincentives to serve both environment and development objectives".

But how do the Nigerian people intend to integrate environment in development? The report advocates that this will be done by ensuring that the major sectoral agencies are made directly responsible and accountable for ensuring that their policies, programmes and budgets support development which is sustainable. The report further lists priority requirements, and guidelines for the major sectors, including the following:

- (a) strengthening environmental information systems;
- (b) analyzing the impact of macro-economic policies on the environment;
- (c) undertaking sustainable development audits;
- (d) introducing resource accounting;
- (e) preparing a national sustainable development strategy

Seychelles is probably the first African country to integrate environmental dimensions in all relevant chapters and sectors of National Development Plan (1990 - 1994). An environmental management plan and investment programme has been prepared for 1990

- 2000 as an extension of the national development plan. Full integration was effected in May 1992 with the creation of a single Ministry of Environment, Economic Planning and External Relations.

A number of countries have stressed the need to introduce EIA studies in appropriate future development projects as a means of ensuring the sustainability of the environmental resources. This action will serve as a vehicle for incorporating environmental perspectives in economic planning process. One of the main bottlenecks in integrating environmental concerns in economic planning has been the shortage of trained personnel to cope with environmental assessments, including E.I.A. This is where AMCEN's programme on environmental economics and accounting will come in handy.

In 1989, at the Kampala Regional Conference on Environment and Sustainable Development, African governments declared, "we undertake to integrate environmental concerns into all existing and future economic and sectoral policies to ensure that they protect and improve the environment and natural resource base on which the health and welfare of our people depends." Yet, today the idea of sustainable development continues to elude most of the African policy makers. It would appear that the concept of "sustainable development" is still unsustainable at least politically and may require further debate.

When I raised up this matter with a Minister of Environment, he scoffed at me and said, "Ministers of Environment can sleep in the same bed with Ministers of Economic Planning but they do not have to dream the same dreams."

As pointed out earlier, most of the country reports have addressed environmental policies but there are no strong signals

that they will be integrated fully with socio economic policies, which is a prerequisite to sustainable development. To do so will require a change in the way decisions are made so as to integrate economic and environment issues comprehensively, making sustainability the ultimate goal at all levels. In other words, environmentally-sound development must be at the centre of the development agenda to which all sectors of society must contribute. Because environmental degradation curtails prospects for future development, its conservation must be central to all development planning processes.

There will be an imperative need for new forms of dialogue to link up various institutions and social actors - science, industry, environmental groups and the public. The purpose of this coordination and consultation will be to harmonize policies in order to achieve cooperation.

As the Nigeria report points out, the widely used economic indicators of economic performance will have to be adjusted to account for the role the environment plays as a source of capital and a sink for waste products generated during production process. Undertaking sustainable development audits or environmental accounting will show the extent to which their previous activities contributed to degradation, protection or improvement of the environment and resource base. As previously pointed out environmental accounting at the national level will result in adjusted GNP figures which will provide economic policy makers with accurate signals of the "health" of the environment and the national economic performance. The national management of environment will, therefore, require a multisectoral and multidisciplinary perspective.

The concept of Eco-Development (Eco- signifying both economic and ecological, since both words are derived from same Greek root oikos, meaning house) refers to integration of social, ecological and economic concerns in planning. For all practical purposes, eco-development and sustainable development are inter-changeable. Again, in eco-development concrete actions are taken up in economic planning including the use of technology, bearing in mind the degree of resilience of the ecosystem, so as to prevent the need for polluter pays principle. Let us hope that many African governments will restructure their economies to embrace the concept of eco-development and eco-technologies which may bring new comparative advantages, enabling some of them to "leapfrog" to new productive systems as well as the organisation of the human factors of production. Obviously, there will initially be strong resistance to his change as noted above despite the economic imperatives.

Essential reforms

In order for environmental perspectives to be integrated fully in development planning process, certain fundamental reforms must be put in place. We will need to ask ourselves questions, including the following:

- (i) Whether national planning agencies include environmental experts as part of their staff;
- (ii) Whether strategic frameworks and economic development are sufficiently integrated and are being pursued as goals of equal importance;
- (iii) Whether public inquiries as well as environmental impact assessment studies are being carried out routinely to

assist African decision makers in siting development projects such as large scale hydro-electric and irrigations schemes;

- (iv) Whether deliberate attempts are being made to raise public awareness and participation of local people in the design and implementation of projects;
- (v) The status of legislative reforms at the national and sub-regional levels on integration of environmental matters in socio-economic development programmes.

VI. ROLE OF ECA IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF AGENDA 21 IN THE CONTEXT OF AMCEN

Status of Environment and Development Programme at ECA

In the proposed revision to the Medium-Term Plan for the period 1992-1997 of programme 30: Regional Cooperation for Development in Africa, adopted by the Forty-seventh session of the General Assembly, the Sub-programme - Environment and Development constitutes a sub-set of sub-programme Poverty Alleviation through Sustainable Development (see Doc. A/47/6(Prog.30/Rev.1). Other elements of this sub-programme are Agriculture and rural development, Marine affairs (living resources component), Human settlements and Population.

Poverty alleviation programme in its strict sense should cut across all Subprogrammes of the Commission, however, the elements placed under this subprogramme appear to be at the heart of development crisis in Africa. Paragraph 30.44 states in part that, "poverty cannot be alleviated unless the pace of economic growth

can be ameliorated and sustained over time; and unless the benefits of growth, including especially access to the means of production, are made to accrue to the masses of the people..."

Paragraph 30.51 underscores the imperative need to transform the structure of the African economies so as to promote environmentally-sound exploitation of resources. To achieve this objective, environmental management should not be addressed as a sectoral issue but should be fully integrated in the development process.

Paragraph 30.54 calls for an increase in the capacity and capability of environment programme both within the Commission and in member States in order to cope with the integration of environmental dimensions into programme development and implementation as well as dealing with issues in the social and economic development process of the region.

Implementation of Agenda 21: Role of the Regional Commissions

Agenda 21 has not been the subject of review of this Report. Agenda 21 is an action plan for 1990s and into the 21 century. It is the basis for a new global partnership for sustainable development and environmental protection. This new relationship is based on common interests and mutual needs. It is a comprehensive programme of action which provides a blue print for action in all areas relating to sustainable development. It calls for changes in economic development activities of all human beings. Agenda 21 is addressed to governments, agencies, organisations and programmes of the United Nations System and to intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and the public at large.

The Regional Commissions have been called upon to assess the need to modify their on-going activities in light of Agenda 21. Section I of Chapter 38 on International Institutional Arrangements of Agenda 21 provides the roles of the regional and sub-regional organizations in the implementation of relevant parts of Agenda 21. The Regional Commissions, Regional Development Banks as well as the Regional Economic and Technical Cooperation Organizations have been called upon:

- (i) to assist countries (in their respective regions) to achieve sustainable development;
- (ii) in collaboration with UNEP and UNDP to strengthen national capacities of member States to enable them implement sustainable development;
- (iii) to play a major role in the implementation of Agenda 21 provisions related to combating drought and desertification;
- (iv) in cooperation with UNEP and other relevant UN bodies, to monitor and make regional assessment of data on the illegal traffic in toxic and dangerous products and its implications;
- (v) to promote the integration of environmental concerns in regional and subregional development policies;
- (vi) to cooperate and collaborate with subregional organizations and relevant bodies of the UN systems in other sectoral areas;

- (vii) to assess the need to modify their on-going activities in the light of Agenda 21.

Imperative Need for Modification of the ECA Environment/Development Programme

In order to implement Agenda 21 in Africa, ECA as the UN organization mandated to assist African member States in their development planning process will have to assert its leadership by ascertaining the full integration of environmental policies in the development planning process within the Commission itself as well as in respective member States. This entails the entire Commission (not only the environmental unit) shifting from sectoral to an integrated multidisciplinary approach to programme planning for the transformation of the African economies. This implies environmental concerns being equally integrated in other sub-programmes such as natural resources and energy development, women and development, industrial and science and technology for development, etc. This approach will enable individual programme managers to appreciate the close relationship between environment and his/her sectoral programme. Again, it is critical for every one concerned to remember that environmental degradation reduces prospects for development, therefore, its conservation must be central to all development planning processes. Moreover, the African economies are more vulnerable to ecological stresses than the economies of industrialized countries.

As pointed out earlier, the new environment unit will, however, need to be strengthened in order to provide the coordination role not only within the Commission but also in member States.

TABLE 1: MATRIX OF SUBJECT AREAS OF AFRICAN ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME: EVOLUTION SINCE ANGEN 1985

ANGEN - 1985	KAMPALA - 1989	AFRICAN COMMON POSITION-ABIDJAN 1991	ANGEN FIFTH SESSION: ADDIS ABABA, 1993
1. Water/River & Lake Basins	Water	Efficient and equitable use of water resources	Environmentally-sound management of fresh water resources
2. Energy	Energy	Securing greater energy self-sufficiency	Securing greater energy-efficiency and sufficiency
3. Genetic resources	Species and ecosystems	Management of biodiversity and biotechnology	Environmentally-sound management of biodiversity, utilizing microbial resources and related biotechnologies
4. Soils and fertilizers	Food security	Food self-sufficiency and food security	Environmentally-sound management of soils and agricultural
5. Science & technology	(Industry)	Optimizing industrial production and preventing pollution	-
6. Environmental education	-	Capacity building, environmental education and training	Environmental education and training
7. Environmental monitoring	Cross-sectoral (in 1,3,4,5,8-12 of matrix)	-	Monitoring and assessing the state of the african environ
8. Climatology	Food security, drought/desertification, species & ecosystems, water	-	-
9. Seas	-	Management of marine and coastal resources	Environmentally-sound management of marine and coastal a including island ecosystems
10. Hazardous wastes	(Industry)	Management of solid and hazardous wastes and toxic chemicals	Environmentally-sound management of hazardous and all wa toxic chemicals
11. Desert & arid lands	Desertification	Reversing desertification in Africa; drought monitoring	Preventing and reversing desertification, mitigating the of drought
12. Forest & woodlands	-	Rational development of forest resources	Environmentally-sound management and use of forests and woodlands

13.	Integrating Environment & Development		(Environmental economics, accounting and management tools)
14.		Development of Environmental legislation	Environmental law, institutions and policies
15.	Population & Human resources (urban challenge)	Health implications of development, Poverty eradication; devel. of human settlement, Managing demographic change and population pressures	Capacity building at national level; Promoting human welfare; environ.& development, managing demographic change & population pressures; Development of human settlement, planning and management
16.		Mitigating global warming and climate change	Managing the environment impacts of climate change
17.			Promotion of subregional and regional cooperation
18.		Popular participation and enhancement of the role of NGOs, youth, women	Promotion of the role of major groups in Africa's environment management
19.		Additional resources for environmental rehabilitation	Mobilization of support for implementation of Africa's environment programme at the national, subregional and regional levels